



**LANGPORT
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Somersetshire.

Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1938

BY
GODFREY CARTER
M.B., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Including the Report of the Sanitary Inspector,
MR. ALBERT FORD
M.S.I.A.

LANGPORT: THE HERALD PRESS.

TO THE CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS

OF THE

Langport Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

In presenting my report for the year 1938, I do not find that there have been any circumstances in the realm of Public Health of outstanding importance. There have been no epidemics of disease and the vital statistics are on the whole, satisfactory.

There is still a further slight decline in the population which I should like to see reversed.

The Birth Rate, I regret to say is still falling, but I am pleased to be able to report a decline in the death rate of a substantial degree.

The Infantile Mortality Rate is only 36 as against 55 in 1937.

There is little change in the incidence of Tuberculosis. The number of deaths during 1938 shows a slight increase, but it must be borne in mind that this is a chronic disease tending to a history of more than one year's duration.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GODFREY CARTER.

RATEABLE VALUE OF THE DISTRICT.
 1st April, 1938
 SUM PRODUCED BY PENNY RATE

£44,437
 £198

TABLE I.

SUMMARY CENSUS OF VITAL STATISTICS.

NOTE.—The Census return in 1938 gave the population as 11,960 after corrections by the Registrar General. He desires the estimation to be based as far as possible on the "Resident" population which he states differs somewhat from the enumeration of the Census.

Estimated Population.	1938 11,960	1937 12,090	1936 12,210	1935 12,350	1934 12,470
Number of Reg- istered Births	136	145	167	162	175
Birth Rate per 1,000	11.37	12	13.67	13.12	14.03
Deaths, all cau- ses, after cor- rection by Registrar General	157	188	181	191	159
Standard Death Rate	13.12	15.5	14.82	15.46	12.7
Infantile Mor- tality, <i>i.e.</i> , number of deaths under twelve months of age per 1000 Births	36.7	55.2	41.9	18.5	23
Total Number of Deaths un- der One year of age	5	8	7	3	4

POPULATION.

The estimated resident population for 1938 was 11,960.

NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES.

The number of inhabited houses in the area was 3,816.

BIRTHS.

The total number of registered Births was 136 which is equivalent to a Birth Rate of 11.37 per 1000 as compared with 12.0 in 1937.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS.

1 male and 2 females were registered in 1938.

DEATHS.

The total number of deaths from all causes during the year (after correction by the Registrar-General for outward and inward transfers) was 159 (namely 89 males and 68 females).

TABLE II.
CAUSES OF DEATH DURING YEAR 1938.

Causes of Death.	Male	Female
All causes	89	68
Influenza	1	—
Bronchitis	2	—
Heart Disease	32	12
Other Circulatory Diseases	6	7
Nephritis	5	4
Cerebral Haemorrhage	5	11
Diabetes	3	—
Pneumonia	2	3
Tuberculosis (lungs)	2	4
„ other forms	1	—
Cancer	8	10
Appendicitis	1	—
Peptic Ulcer	1	—
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	1
Congenital Causes	3	—
Diarrhoea under 2 years	1	—
Senility	3	5
Encephalitis Lithargica	—	1
Other Defined Diseases	6	3
Violence	5	3
Digestive Diseases	1	3
Other Diseases of Liver	—	1

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

No cases were registered during the year, 1938.

TABLE III.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis).**INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED.**

The following were reported during the year:—

Scarlet Fever	.....	.....	.....	.....	12
Diphtheria	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
Pneumonia (Primary)			.....	.....	11
Chicken Pox	.....	.....	.....	.....	23
Puerperal Pyrexia	.....	.....	.....	.....	3
Erysipelas	.....	.....	.....	.....	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum			.....	.....	1

TUBERCULOSIS.

All cases notified are forwarded weekly to the County M.O.H. who deals with all cases of Tuberculosis.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary for Examination and Treatment of Tuberculosis is open every Thursday.

During the year 10 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 3 cases of Tuberculosis (other forms) were reported to me, making a total of 13 cases.

The number of deaths was 7.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1938.

Particulars of new cases of Tuberculosis and of all deaths from the disease in the area during the year, 1938:—

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary		Pulmon-ary		Non-Pulmon-ary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—								
1—								
5—								
10—								
15—	2	1		1		1		
20—								
25—		1	1		2		1	
35—	4		1					
45—		2			1			
55—						2		
65 & upwards								
Totals	6	4	2	1	3	3	1	

HOUSING.

NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR:—

(1) With State Assistance.		
(a) By the Local Authority	.....	14
(b) By other Bodies or Persons	.....	0
(2) Otherwise	.....	20

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

(1) Total Number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts).	841
(2) Number of dwelling-houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	630
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	33
(4) Number of dwelling-houses found defective but not unfit	390

HOUSING ACTION.

Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of <i>informal</i> action by the Local Authority or their officers	127
--	-----

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:—

A.—PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTIONS 9, 10 & 16 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	1
---	---

- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—
- | | | |
|---|-------|---|
| (a) By owners | ..... | 1 |
| (b) By the Local Authority in default of owners | | 0 |

B.—PROCEEDINGS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS:—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 21
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—
- | | | |
|---|-------|----|
| (a) By owners | ..... | 14 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners | ..... | 0 |

C.—PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTIONS 11, 13 & 26 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936:—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which demolition orders were made 14
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 11

D.—HOUSING ACT, 1936.—OVERCROWDING.

- (a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 12
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein 12
- (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein 80
- (b) Number of new cases of Overcrowding relieved during the year 0
- (c) (i) Number of cases of Overcrowding relieved during the year 23
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases 122

The Ministry of Health have approved a Housing Scheme to re-house the 12 overcrowded families.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLIES OF DISTRICT.

The following districts have a piped water supply, namely:—

- 1.—**Langport and Kingsbury Episcopi.**—From Compton Durville; this supplies the whole parishes of Kingsbury Episcopi, Langport, Aller, Huish Episcopi, Muchelney and a small portion of High Ham.
- 2.—**Somerton and District.**—From Lytes Cary, supplying the parishes of Somerton and Kingsdon, also two parishes in the Yeovil Rural District.
- 3.—**Barrington and District.**—From a spring supplying the parishes of Barrington, Isle Brewers, Isle Abbotts, Drayton, Middelney Manor and part of Curry Rivel.
- 4.—**Long Sutton.**—The regular examinations of this supply proved the water to be unsatisfactory, the result being the decision of the Council to instal a Chlorinating Plant as early as possible. The order was then given and the work of installation commenced.
- 5.—**Western Parishes.**—Supply from Chard R.D.C.. This supplies the parishes of Beererocombe, Curry Mallett, Fivehead and all the higher parts of Curry Rivel, including Langport Westover and Wick.
- 6.—**Eastern Parishes.**—With the view of supplying the Eastern Parishes which consist of Babcary, Barton St. David, Compton Dundon, Charlton Mackrell, High Ham, Keinton Mandeville, Kingsdon and Pitney, a Pumping Test was carried out from the existing borehole at Compton Durville. This test proved to be very satisfactory and the Engineer was instructed to prepare a scheme to water these parishes from the Compton Durville source.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The only portions of the District where Sewerage Schemes exist are:—

- 1.—**Somerton.** Here about four-fifths of the dwelling-

houses are drained and conveyed to the Sewage Field where downward intermittent filtration is carried out.

The new portion of the Irrigation Works, consisting of two acres, is working very satisfactorily and is a great asset to the field.

The proposed new Sewer for the West End of Somerton, for which an Inquiry was held in September, has not yet been commenced.

The recommendation to provide a New Sewer from the New Inn to replace the existing 12" Sewer in the Railway Cutting, when carried out, will prevent the flooding of the works during heavy rains.

Effluent samples collected at the outfall have proved to be satisfactory.

2.—Kingsbury Episcopi. The scheme at Kingsbury Episcopi is working satisfactorily.

3.—Curry Rivel. The new Works were completed in October and trouble has been experienced with an excess of storm water.

When this has been removed, the plant should give satisfactory results.

The Council have appointed a whole-time attendant to deal with the plants at Curry Rivel, Kingsbury Episcopi and East Lambrook.

Effluent samples collected have proved to be satisfactory.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The only risk of pollution likely in any River or Stream in the District is the River Cary at Somerton where the effluent from the Somerton Sewage Farm discharges into this river.

For 6 months of the year, during the dry season, the land absorbs the whole output of the Sewage but when the effluent reaches the River, samples are periodically taken and these have always proved to be satisfactory.

No action with regard to Rivers and Streams was found necessary in any other part of the district during 1938.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

As will be seen in the Summary of Inspections, 102 water

closets and 15 earth closets were erected during the year in place of, in most cases, foul privies.

In all cases where the Public Water Supplies and Sewer were available the modern water closet was installed. Where no water supply or sewer is available the type of Closet in use generally is the pail. Very few privies now exist.

COLLECTION & DISPOSAL OF HOUSE REFUSE.

The Council's scheme for the systematic Collection under the direction of the Sanitary Inspector for the whole of the District is working satisfactorily.

The S. D. Freighter, which is of 10 cubic yards capacity, has been in continuous use with satisfactory results.

The Council were able to make satisfactory arrangements for the use of a disused Quarry in the centre of the District where plenty of covering media was available. Consequently all the refuse is covered up before the men leave the Tip. The average number of loads collected weekly is nine, average weight per load, 3 tons.

No requests have been made during the year for the removal of trade wastes.

This service has proved to be of much benefit throughout the whole district, rendering dumping unnecessary.

CESSPOOL AND PAIL EMPTYING.—The only work carried out under this heading is a portion of the West End of Somerton. This is done by a contractor under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector.

When the New Sewer for the West End of Somerton is completed the cost of this service will be considerably reduced.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

This is reviewed elsewhere in the report.

SHOPS AND OFFICES (SHOPS ACT, 1934)

No Statutory Action has been necessary during the year.

There are no large shops in either of the Parishes and only a limited number of lock-up shops in the district.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

The only action during the year under the above heading

was a request to the Milk Factory at Somerton to use their high chimney for emitting smoke in preference to the low chimney which was an annoyance to the Council House Tenants in Etsome Terrace. The request was immediately acceded to.

CAMPING SITES.

No application for a licence in respect of any Camping Site was received during the year under section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

An application to the Ministry of Health for Approval of Byelaws to deal with Tents, Vans, Sheds and etc. will be made to the Ministry of Health at an early date.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are no public or privately owned Swimming Baths in the district. Occasionally the Rivers are used by a few bathers, this practice is not a common one.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No action for eradication of Bed Bugs either in Council or private dwelling-houses has been necessary during the year.

RATS AND MICE.

The National Rat Week from November 7th to 12th, proved very successful in 1938.

About 33 persons were provided with poison by the Council for the extermination of these pests and from the reports of these persons, the laying of this bait, in most cases, totally rid their premises of rats and mice.

HOUSING (RURAL WORKERS) ACTS, 1926—38.

During the year 8 applications in respect of 13 Cottages were submitted to the County Council.

In each case a grant was recommended to the applicant and ultimately given and the work proceeded with.

The number of Cottages completed during the year 1938 was 19.

MILK SUPPLY.

Number of Producers on the Register 445

Number of Distributors on the Register divided as follows:—

Distributors also producers 117

Distributors only 0

Number of Samples taken and submitted to the County Analyst
during the year:—

For Tubercle Bacilli 30

For Bacillus Coli 12

For Accredited 58

For Pasteurised 2

For Tuberculin Tested 20

(A producer is only included as a distributor if he
definitely makes a business of selling his milk by retail to
individual customers.)

Number of Licences given to Graded Milk Distributors 2

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

During the year the routine work of examinations of the Slaughter Houses, and the animals killed therein has been regularly carried out.

Slaughter Houses in the district total 14.

Licensed Slaughter Houses	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11
Registered	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
Knacker's Yard	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
During the year, recorded visits to Slaughter Houses						1,496

MEAT CONDEMNED DURING THE YEAR.

PIGS.

Whole Carcases	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4
Head only	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	51
Internal Organs	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11
Livers	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10

OXEN.

Whole Carcases	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
Whole of Organs	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0
Heads	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	18
Livers	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	30
Lungs	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	16
Forequarter	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0
Trimming	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	131 lbs.

SHEEP.

Whole Carcases	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
Livers	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	21
Heads	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1

CALVES.

Whole Carcases	1
----------------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	---

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

During the year 1938, 8 cases of Scarlet Fever and 2 cases of Diphtheria were treated in the Hospital. All made good recoveries.

There is a horse-drawn ambulance for removal of Infectious cases to Hospital, and a steam Disinfector exists in the Hospital grounds for disinfecting articles. This is carried out under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector.

The New Joint Isolation Hospital at South Petherton will be completed early in the coming year.

DISTRICT NURSES.

District Nurses who also act as Midwives are available in five districts. These Nurses are not under the control of the Council; but are supported by Voluntary Contributions.

CHAPTER IV.

FACTORIES & WORKSHOPS.

The number of Factories total 32 in the District and consist mainly of:—

Wheelwrights, Smiths, Printers, Tailoring, Bakeries, Harness and Coachwork, as well as Milk Factories.

THE NUMBER OF WORKSHOPS Total 46.

Whilst a considerable amount of home-work (especially Gloving) goes on throughout the district.

During the year no notices were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories, for defects.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

GODFREY CARTER.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Number of Dwellings Inspected during the year	841
Number of Re-inspections during the year	168
New Earth Closets erected during the year	15
New Water Closets	102
New Septic Tanks	49
Houses connected to the Public Water Supplies	136
New Sanitary Sinks fitted	94
Houses Disinfected	22
Visits to Slaughter Houses	1496
Visits to Bakehouses	16
Water Samples taken for Analysis	125
Milk Samples for Bacteria Count (i.e., for Cleanliness)	12
Pasteurised	2
Milk Samples taken for examination for Tubercle Bacilli	30
Milk Samples taken for examination for "Accredited"	58
Milk Samples taken for Tuberculin Tested	20
Visits to Water Works	183
Visits to Cowsheds and Dairies	574
Sewage Samples Collected	3
Drain Tests made during the year	112
Houses connected to Sewer during the year	119
Visits to Sewage Farm and Works	76
Nuisances abated	64
New Food Storage provided	43

A. FORD,

Sanitary Inspector.

